THE WHITE PRINCE

By Frank Poxon

AWHILE ago I told the story of Kit Caister and Cobbe o' Melton, as Jack Quartermaine told it to me. If I remember rightly, the story had points—if they were not lost in the setting down—and I could wish that old Jack Quartermaine held my pen, and not I, for there was some flavor in his talk which I found not easy to transfer to paper, as there was flavor, too, in his talk when he told me this story of the "White Prince," and I can only hope I catch it right, so that you, in turn, will catch it, too. Old Jack himself liked the story well enough, I think, for when he had come to a finish he sipped his port and sighed.

"The world's grown up since then," he said, and sipped and sighed again. "And to speak truth, I find it dull." And I thought I knew what he meant.

* * * * *

"I'm from the West Country, Jim, as perhaps you know," he began, "and if I live to be a hundred I hope I'll never be ashamed of that. If I ever am, that will be a change for me; for, boy or man, I've never blushed for anything that came from Gloucester way. And once upon a time I was always blithe to back my fancy and stand on the West against all England when it came to a little mill in the ring; and if it comes to that, I don't know that my pocket ever suffered a great deal, because the lads from Gloucester and Bristol way stood for something among the fancy in those days.

"And another who would always back the West Country was my very good friend, Arthur Adair, who's about the most important man in the story; because, you see, if it hadn't have been for him—well, we'll come to that in good time. Arthur Adair! Ah, my boy, there are not over-many bred like him nowadays, and I'll always count myself a lucky man that he called himself my friend. What was he like? I've not the trick of words, Jim, and I'd find it hard to make you see him. If I told you he was one of the biggest dandies in London I'd be right, and you might figure him out as a fop, able to handle his cane, take his snuff, and talk to a woman, and able to do nothing else. You'd be right, and you'd be mighty wrong. He was a bit of a literary chap, too, and could turn his verses as prettily as any amateur I ever knew. And now you'll be thinking he wore his hair over his velvet collar, and squirmed at the sight of good red blood.

"Squirm! Why, Adair was at the ringside of every mill worth seeing in those days, and if ever he had to put up his hands himself, well, the other fellow had taken something on that wasn't easy. I was fond enough of the game myself, but I do believe Adair was fonder still. He knew everybody in the fancy from the champion of England downward; and they all knew him, and liked him, too. It was a wonder to see him and them together, and to see how Adair liked his company, because he was mighty fastidious in his habits, was Adair; and at times the fancy was—well, we'll say, a trifle rough. But Adair seemed to understand 'em, and they seemed to understand him, too, and though he'd hob-nob with 'em as thick as thick could be, it was always 'Mr. Adair.' I reckon they knew they were talking to the real article and not sham stuff, and it didn't hurt 'em to be respectful.

"One October day Adair and I set out from town on the Dover road, because the word had gone round that there was to be a little debate down Sevenoaks way, and a party to the debate was big John Crabbe of Bristol, and at that time Crabbe was as near as near could be to the top of the tree. And Crabbe won a short minute before the men in blue came up, and the pilgrimage back to London began, with those of us who had been behind the man from the West in rare good spirits. I remember that we all went into a well-known house of call called The Kentish Hopman, and it was there that things had a beginning, because it was there that Adair and I ran into Seth Burnett and his bosom friend, Harradine. And if I was going to keep you all night I could tell you some rare tales about two of the prettiest wrong 'uns I ever had the bad luck to run up against. But I'll just tell you this, that Seth Burnett was from Gloucester way, same as Adair and myself, and when I said just now that I'd never been ashamed of anything from the West Country I'd forgotten Seth Burnett. He was a well-connected youngster, too, and it was common knowledge that he was next-of-kin to his uncle, Old John Burnett, of Dene Manor, who was just as white as his young rake of a nephew was spotted. But though young Burnett came from good stock he never showed it, and he was known all over London town as an ill-mannered waster, and one of those it was just as well to be a bit shy with. As for Harradine, he was the sort of friend you'd expect a young cub like Seth Burnett to have. He'd got polish, and that's what Burnett hadn't, but it was the polish of the man who had lived on his wits as long as he could remember.

"Well, there the lot of us were, eating and drinking the house dry, for it was early morning yet, and the air had an edge to it. The loudest man in the room was Seth Burnett. He'd won, and he was behaving in a fashion that rubbed me all the wrong way, and made me mad to think that one day he'd follow in the wake of such a grand old sportsman as John Burnett of Dene Manor. What made me maddest of all was to hear this young cub championing the West Country, and I figured it out that the West must be in a bad way to have such an advocate.

"'Only Gloucester can stand up against Gloucester,' he shouted, 'and as to that, Crabbe is cock o' Gloucester, and will be for years to come.'

"And at that I heard Arthur Adair cut in; I was surprised, because Adair wasn't the kind to hold truck with Seth Burnett and his cronies.

"'It is pleasant to hear you are so loyal to Gloucester, Mr. Burnett,' he said, in his politest fashion. 'I'm from Gloucester myself, and, believe me, I think the world of the West.'

"Seth Burnett colored up a little, and he didn't seem to know whether Adair was chaffing or not. Adair was like that, often—he wanted reading.

"'But, 'pon my word, Mr. Burnett,' he went on, 'you pain me when you say that Crabbe is our only good man. Think again, Mr. Burnett, think again.'

"Burnett flushed again, and I was certain that he thought now that Adair was trying to rag him.

"'And who the hell is there besides?' he said, like any potman. Burnett was like that—he couldn't even swear and seem a gentleman.

"'You press me hard, Mr. Burnett, upon my soul, and at another time I'd be vastly happy to relieve your curiosity. But it occurred to me that before I do that you might be inclined to back Crabbe,' and Adair took snuff.

"Seth Burnett stared, and I saw him leer up at Harradine. And then he laughed outright.

"'You mean, would I back Crabbe against anything Gloucester born and bred?'

"'You catch my meaning to a nicety.' Adair drawled. 'Against anything Gloucester born and bred.'

"Burnett laughed again, louder still, and called for more drink.

"'I don't see your joke,' he said, 'and there's no call for me to see it. But I'll back Crabbe against anything bor nand bred in Gloucester for every shilling I've got. And I call on everybody here to prove that it was your proposal and not mine. Why, man, there's not a Gloucester man—born and bred, you said—who could live a round with him. Damn it, Adair, I thought you knew more about the fancy, and he said something to Harradine, and I saw him sneer.

"Adair was cool as ice and polite as my Lord Chesterfield, and he looked a fine figure of a man as he stood in that motley crowd, looking across at Burnett with a smile on his lips.

"'You are vastly considerate for my poor pocket, Mr. Burnett,' he said. 'But I would persist in my foolishness.'

"'Look here, Adair,' Burnett said, and a light had come into his eyes. 'You mean this? You'll bet?'

"Adair still smiled across. 'Will you?' he said.

"'Yes, I'll bet for ever on that, Adair,' he said. "John Crabbe against anything Gloucester born and bred. Those are the terms?'

"'Those are the terms, Mr. Burnett. What will you bet? I will disclose my nominee when our little wager is accomplished. He will come within the conditions named.'

"'He'll damn well have to,' Burnett cut in, and Adair only smiled at the coarse jibe. 'I'll bet two thousand on Crabbe. That too much, Adair?'

"Adair just shrugged. 'I was hoping for something more ambitious, Mr. Burnett, after you expressed your determination to—what were your words?—to bet forever."

"One or two laughed at that, and I saw the color flame up into Burnett's face.

"'I was letting you down lightly,' he snarled. 'If you really want to pay for judgment as rank bad as any I ever heard of, why, I'll be blithe to meet you. We'll make it—five.'

"'We'll make it—five, Mr. Burnett. So that little matter is settled,' and Adair took snuff again.

"'And I'll thank you, Adair,' says Burnett, 'to keep your word now. Who's your man—Gloucester bred and born—Gloucester born and bred?'

"And Adair didn't keep him waiting. 'My man, Mr. Burnett? Why, my man is the White Prince.'

"And I give you my word, Jim, that I was never in a more silent crowd than I was just then, in that crowded room at the Kentish Hopman. Silent as the grave for a time, and then Seth Burnett's voice rasped out. He was white as paper.

"'What do you mean?' he said, and I knew he was scared. 'What—do—you—mean?'

"'You didn't catch the name, Mr. Burnett?' Adair drawled, sweet as honey. 'I said that my man was the "White Prince."'

"I saw the temper surge up into Burnett's face, and he turned to Harradine and said, so that all could hear him:

"'Here's sharp practice, George. He wants the Romany boy and he said Gloucester born and bred.'

"If Burnett had noticed Adair's look just then he might have been careful, but there was nothing in Adair's words to give him the tip.

"'The "White Prince" is Gloucester born and bred, Mr. Burnett,' he said, and flicked a speck of dust from his coat.

"'He—he isn't,' Burnett blurted out, and his face was all mottled red.

"Without a word, Adair walked up to his man, in that mincing way he had, and he says:

"'I think I misunderstood you, Mr. Burnett. You said——?' and he waited.

"And Burnett thought better of it.

"'You surprised me, Adair,' he said, with a bad grace. 'You surprised us all, I think.'

"Harradine cut in then, and said to Adair, with a make-believe heartiness:

"'I'm sure such a good sportsman as yourself, Mr. Adair, will not object to giving us proof, as a matter of form.'

"And butter wouldnt have melted in Adair's mouth when he replied, as soft as silk:

"'You shall have your proof, Mr. Harradine. 'Twas only reasonable to ask for it. You shall have proof at ringside—proof or forfeit.'

"'Proof or forfeit, Mr. Adair, you say?'

"'Your hearing is excellent, Mr. Harradine. Proof or forfeit, I said.'

"And soon after that, Jim, we were all on the London road again, and in the sporting haunts that night many a good tale was told of what had happened early that morning in the Kentish Hopman.

II.

"I must tell you this, Jim," Quartermaine went on, when his second cigar was well under way, "that I was as much taken aback as Seth Burnett when Arthur Adair had named the 'White Prince' as his nominee. The fighting man he named had just come to the front, and there were men grown old in the fancy who said that this boy—and he was only that, really—would style himself champion of England before he was a great deal older. A Romany lad, I'd always understood him to be, who'd learned his fighting in the rough and tumble school of the booths, taking on all comers and all weights. Some one had seen him and had been taken with his style, and the Romany Boy, as he was first called, was brought up to London and got his chance. He took it, as I told you, and when he had beaten Ben Baldy down Ascot way in his third or fourth fight—I forget which—the ball was right at his feet. It was about then that he ceased to be called the Romany Boy and become the 'White Prince.' He got his new name because he was such a thoroughbred in appearance, and because, too, he'd got a skin as white as satin—as white and as smooth. Perhaps you've seen the prints, Jim, of rare Jem Belcher; well, I'd say that this youngster was built on that pattern. He filled his clothes like your hand fills a glove, Jim, and when you saw him stripped to the buff, you'd have been blind to beauty if you hadn't admired such a specimen of a man. But it's handsome is as handsome does in the ring, and the 'White Prince' had something else to back him up besides his good looks. He'd got science and he'd got 'devil,' although I never saw a less vicious fighting man. But there, Jim, I could rattle on about the 'White Prince' all night, and forget the other part of the story.

"When next I got the chance to talk to Adair about what had happened that morning in the Kentish Hopman, the fight had been all fixed up, and the word had gone round that it was to be down Gloucester way, in a meadow on old John Burnett's estate, and that was fitting, because the West Country was mad, to a man, on seeing the fight.

"I ran across Adair taking the air one morning in the Mall, and as usual he looked as fresh as a Spring daisy.

"'And how's the "White Prince?"' I asked him, after a time, and he smiled and said that the 'White Prince' was fit to fight for his life. And at that I told him how surprised I'd been when he had claimed that the 'White Prince' was Gloucester born and bred, and I dare say I hinted that I'd be relieved if he could tell me where his proof was.

"He cocked his eye at me as we walked along, and says he:

"'The proof's in my pocket, Jack, and not a bad place for it, either. What say you?' And without more ado he pulled out a yellow, creased old paper, and handed it over. 'All the King's lawyers couldn't make a hole in that, Jack,' he said.

"It was the lad's own birth certificate, and it told all the world who saw it that he was born in the parish of Bilstock, in the Forest of Dene, just under twenty years back, and that John Harding was his father and Ann Harding his mother. And when I tell you that a good many years ago the old man who is spinning this story was born in the village next to Bilstock, in the Forest of Dene, you will know how interested I was in the sight of that yellow bit of paper. It knocked me all of a heap to know that the 'White Prince' was born in the next parish to my own, and I said as much, and asked Adair how he had found that out. He told me the youngster had confided to him—all sorts and conditions of men confided in Adair for some reason or other—and that some time after that, when he was staying in Gloucestershire, he had taken the trouble to go over to Bilstock and had seen the original of that yellow certificate in the parish register.

"'As for the boy himself, Jack,' he said, 'he knows nothing about any life except the life he lived among the Romany folk. He was travelling with them when first he could recall anything, and he went on travelling with them until his mother died. And he was with them until Tony Carberry fetched him up to London, because he figured him out as a champion in the making. But that don't matter a row of pins, Jack; I've got all the proof I need, and I'd say it'll be more than enough for Seth Burnett and Harradine, and all that crowd.'

"He slipped the paper back into his pocket and patted his coat.

"'It's as safe there as anywhere,' he said, and I knew well enough what he meant, for I recalled those words Adair had used at the Kentish Hopman, when he had said: 'Proof or forfeit.'

"We fell to talking of Seth Burnett, and I saw what I had seen a hundred times before, that Adair thoroughly disliked the fellow.

"'He does ill credit to the West Country, I'm thinking,' he said, 'and I don't know that I'm squeamish. But Burnett don't ring true, and I'm thinking there'll be a poor sportsman at Dene Manor when John Burnett goes to the happy hunting-grounds, and that won't be long, for all I hear. Old John is ageing fast, I'm told, and I'd say it helps him to do that when he thinks who is coming after him to fill his shoes. There's no love lost there; I happen to know that old Burnett thinks about the same of his nephew as the rest of us do.'

"Well, that talk in the Mall was about a week before the fight was due to come off, and I didn't see Adair again for several days. But on the evening before the fight his man came round and said Mr. Adair would be glad to see me on a matter of importance, and I set off for his rooms in the Haymarket. And as soon as I saw Adair I knew that something was wrong, because his look was black as thunder, and he wasn't a man easily upset. He jumped up to receive me, and then I saw that his hand was swathed in bandages and that there was a lump the size of a pigeon's egg on his right temple.

"'The damned villain!' he burst out before I'd sat down, and then again: 'The damned villain!' I asked him what he meant, although I thought I knew, and he told me that a few hours before he'd been set on by roughs in broad daylight, just outside his rooms. 'There were too many of 'em,' he said bitterly, 'and they were too quick. I only hit out once, and then something landed here,' he put his hand up to his temple, 'and I remember nothing more at all. They stripped me clean, and they got what I'm thinking they were after. They got that certificate I showed you, and I'll always blame myself for not being more careful. A couple o' nights ago I told Tony Carberry in a Mall coffee house what I told you, and showed him the paper; as to Tony, he's white as snow, and always was. But it wasn't till an hour ago that I remembered that soon after I told him what I did I saw George Harradine throwing the dice at the next table. I can prove nothing, Jack, but here and now I'd lay my life to a shilling that he heard and saw, and gave the office to Seth Burnett. And after that the rest was easy, and I'm dead sure that Burnett had that paper inside the hour after his hired men had half killed me. And I'll be asking you what you make of that for a pretty mess?' he finished. 'You know what I said—proof or forfeit at the ringside.'

"It made me mad to sit and listen, and feel as helpless as I did, and for the life of me I didn't know what to say. We talked it over this way and that, but we always came up against a dead wall, and it was plain enough to see that Adair was half beside himself with mortification. But the finish of it was that he clapped me on the shoulder and said he wouldn't thrown in his towel till he was beaten.

"'I'll meet him at the ringside,' he said, 'and I might have a word to say to him.' And Adair didn't look pleasant, I'll tell you, when he said that, and I fell to wondering what his word would be when he and Seth Burnett came face to face."

III.

"Yes, Jim, and I was still wondering what that word would be when Adair and I came up to the ringside nigh on noon the next day, and saw as bonny a sight as ever I set eyes on, with the stakes pitched in a little cup of ground, and all sporting London and the West Country perched around the sides on the sloping banks of grass; 'twas a place built for a mill if ever there was one. One of the first men I saw was Seth Burnett; he was standing with Harradine, and near the two was Seth's uncle, John Burnett, looking old and shaky, but game as a fighting cock. He'd have been at the ringside if he'd had to come on crutches, because I dare say he figured it out that he wouldn't get the chance of seeing many more affairs like that—and on his own land, too. Adair went up to him and shook hands.

"'How's your man, Mr. Adair?' asked old Burnett, and Adair told him that the 'White Prince' was fit as hands could make him.

"He'd just told Burnett that when Seth came up, and as I saw the leer on his face, I could have struck the dirty smile from his lips.

"'There's a little formality to go through, Adair,' he said, and smirked again.

"And Adair surprised me when he turned to that low rascal and smiled, and spoke as cool and pleasant as though he'd just run up against an old friend.

"'Ah, yes, Mr. Burnett, of course,' he said. 'Proof or forfeit, I said, and at the ringside. Proof or forfeit it shall be, Mr. Burnett, and at the ringside, but shall we say after the mill and not before? 'Tis just our own private affair. You'd vastly oblige me, Mr. Burnett, to accede—'pon my soul you would.'

"Burnett looked a bit doubtful, and then he grinned and told Adair he could have that as he liked. And after he'd gone Adair turned to me and shrugged his shoulders.

"'We'll see the mill, any way,' he said; 't'other business can wait.' But I knew for certain that he saw no way out—no way out at all.

"Well, we did see the mill, and I never saw a prettier one. The 'White Prince' was up against one of the best men in England, and I'll only say that the 'White Prince' won in four rounds, for it was in the fourth that a towel came flapping into the ring from Crabbe's corner. It was grand to see the boy, and I'll swear that, from the moment the pair left their corners till Crabbe was beaten I never thought once of what Adair had called a private affair between him and Seth Burnett, and an almighty serious one at that, for Adair. No, I never want to see a grander show than the 'White Prince' gave that day. He was a picture in his looks and he was a picture in his fighting, a real picture; and Crabbe, good man though he was, never saw the way he went. The crowd stood there, and for the most part they were silent as the grave—the boy had them spell-bound I think. They only shouted once, and that was in the last round, when the 'White Prince' went in to finish his job. As he left his corner I saw him touch a little gold charm that he'd got hung round his neck, and as he touched it I saw him smile. It was after that smile that he set the crowd alight, and no wonder, because they were seeing a little P. R. classic, if ever there was one.

"But I'll tell you all about the fight some other time, Jim—if you want to sit up all night. I said that the towel came in during the fourth round, and it was just then that I remembered—and wondered what was going to happen now.

"I didn't have to wait long, either, because Seth Burnett and Harradine, and one or two more of their set, came up to where Adair and I and old John Burnett were standing. I thought young Burnett looked a bit scared and as though he, too, was wondering what was going to happen. But he plucked up heart to ask his question:

"'Your man has won, Adair, and a damned good man, too, say all of us. But I'd like your proof now, that he's what you said he was, Gloucester born and bred.' He said that, but for the life of him he couldn't meet Adair's eyes.

"And then Adair spoke, and, from first to last, he might have been passing compliments to a lady, so cool he was.

"'My man was born in Bilstock, twenty years ago,' he said, 'and his father was John Harding and his mother was Ann Harding. I saw the lad's birth certificate myself, as did my friend here, Jack Quartermaine, and also Tony Carberry. That was my proof, and it was stolen from me yesterday in London town by a gang of murdering cut-throats.' He stopped just for a half second, and then smiled across at Seth Burnett. 'What did you do with it, Mr Burnett?' he drawled, and he was never more polite in his life.

"I knew my men, and I knew that anything might happen then. But what did happen knocked me all of a heap. Old John Burnett had stepped forward between Adair and his nephew; he held up his hand, and I made it out that he was trying to soothe things down a bit. He stood there, and never said a word, and then at last he did speak, but it was to himself and not to us.

"'Harding!' he said in a whisper, and then again, 'Harding!' and he was still as a figure of stone.

"Still for a moment, and then I saw that he was trembling like a leaf, and when I looked at his face again I wondered what had brought that look on to it; he looked for all the world as though he'd just seen a ghost. Frightened. Jim, just frightened.

"Just then the 'White Prince' and his seconds passed behind our group, and I saw old John Burnett step forward and put his hand on the 'White Prince's' shoulder. The boy was still in his fighting kits with an ulster thrown over him, and I heard old Burnett say something to him—I couldn't catch what. The 'White Prince' smiled and flung back his coat, and as he did that Burnett put out his hand and took hold of that gold charm I'd seen the boy touch as he stepped out to begin that fourth round. And a moment later I saw that the locket had opened, and that old John Burnett had taken something out. He'd taken out two wisps of hair, the one black and one golden, and there he stood, with the hair curling round his finger, and not a man moved or spoke.

"He stood there, Jim, and then, all of a sudden, I saw that he was crying. The tears were trickling down his hard old face as though he'd never stop, and then something happened that I'll carry to my grave. Old Burnett drew himself up to his full height, and there was a look on his face I can't describe. But—but kind of proud, Jim; proud and very happy. And then he put out his arms toward the 'White Prince' and gave out a great cry.

"'My boy! my boy!' he cried, and then he drew back and bared his head. 'The Lord is good,' he said, in a voice I'll never forget. 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.'

IV.

Jack Quartermaine seemed to see that picture he had just called up, because he came to a long reverie, and I would not interrupt it.

"An hour later," he said at last, "John Burnett gave us his story in Dene Manor. There were four listeners—Adair and myself the 'White Prince,' and Seth Burnett—and in all my life I never saw such evil hatred on a man's face as I saw on Seth Burnett's that afternoon, as he listened, and slowly came to the knowledge that he would never reign at Dene Manor.

"Burnett told his story, and he did not excuse himself when the story was against himself, as it was in parts. When he was in the early twenties, he had fallen in love with a village girl. She was miles below him in position, but that didn't matter—then. He married her—taking his first two names of John Harding—in a parish a score of miles from Dene; and then Burnett set the girl up in a little house at Bilstock, half a dozen miles from Dene Manor. His father was alive then, and John knew what a terrible scene there would be if ever his father knew what he had done.

"'I showed the white feather, Jack,' he said to me, 'and when a man does that he pays. I paid the price of losing the only woman I ever loved, for no other ever came into my life. Yes, that's the price I paid for showing the white feather, Jack,' he finished, and I never saw a greater distress in a man's face than I saw in his just then. He went on to tell us that several years ago the chief of a roaming party of gypsies had called on him and given him a sealed letter. 'It just told me her last message,' Burnett said. 'That she had loved me all her life, and loved me then, but that she knew she had done the right thing.'

"'It was meet that I should pay—as I did—in bitterness of spirit,' he said solemnly, 'but the good God has been merciful to an old man.' And then his voice dropped to a whisper, and he walked over to the 'White Prince.' 'My dearly beloved son,' he said as gently as a woman; and the two of them, the old man and the young one, left us."

* * * * *

"I'll try some of your tobacco," old Quartermaine said after a time, "How did you like the story?"

Medical Science Shows That War Degrades the Race

IT has been asserted by some that war is a phenomenon necessary for the development of humanity and for social evolution—that collective assassination is a source of progress, since in the struggle the stronger races survive, while the weaker succumb and disappear. They regard war as a phenomenon of natural selection which justifies and confirms Darwin's theory, or as a hurricane which purifies the social surroundings, uprooting weak and parasitic growths, leaving the earth free to nourish only those more robust and worthy of living, and imparting ozone to the social atmosphere.

Again, and from a more directly medical point of view, they consider war as a blood-letting process which depletes society, making the activity of each part more effective to the advantage of the whole. Dr. Dragotti, in a recent issue of Il Policlinico, combats this view, saying that it would be difficult to find at the present day, and in any part of the world, even in those countries which are immune from the scourge, anyone who would have the courage to affirm that the war imposed on the world by the sins of a military caste is a bestower of progress and benefit.

There can be no doubt that war, the editor of the London Lancet declares, and especially the present one, multiplies the disastrous effects of all the factors of decay in the human race. The sole advantage from the point of view of eugenics has been the suppression of alcohol, but it is doubtful whether after the war vodka, absinthe and beer will not take their place again among the vicious habits of man. Toil, discomfort and innutrition not only light up hidden foci of tubercle, but afford a favorable soil for the implantation of germs, the diffusion of which is greatly favored by overcrowding in barracks and workshops.

Still more serious in diffusion and effect are the neuroses. Oppenheim, who in the early period of the war found cause for congratulation in the extraordinary resistance of the nervous system in his compatriots, had afterward to confess that in the space of a few months he had come across a number of neuropathics largely in excess of that observed during the whole of his career. Nor is the organism of woman, the static element and preserver of the characteristics of the race, spared by war, which tends to lower the physical value even of the non-combatants.

So far Dr. Dragotti's thesis is difficult to assail, but his opinion that morality is not rendered more robust by war will not be universally shared. He agrees that if the spirit of sacrifice reaches the sublime, on the other hand the men whom the war has turned into homicides, thieves, incendiaries and violators cannot return to civil life as more moral beings.

After the slaughter of the French Revolution and after the Napoleonic wars in France there arose a time of luxury. Men satiated with blood and strife, give themselves over to pleasure; the women, now in excessive numbers relatively to the opposite sex, increased their wiles and their vices; France abandoned herself to the most unbridled libertinage. A similar position has been observed after many collective disasters, and the phenomenon was witnessed after the earthquakes in Calabria and Sicily.

Certainly history does not prove that victorious races are necessarily worthy of a greater civilization, and the rest of Dr. Dragotti's arguments are incontrovertible. The struggle for existence in races is showing not only in a destructive competition between individuals of the same or allied species, but, in the human race, assumes rather the form of a struggle toward well-being, a struggle by which man tends to subjugate the forces of nature, and despoil them for the benefit of the community, a struggle in which the individual sacrifices himself for the general good.

In war, on the other hand, man destroys himself and his works and enfeebles the future generations in the conflict which they will have to wage against nature. War is antagonistic to eugenics. It is not like the storm that uproots parasitic plants, the hurrican which purifies the atmosphere, but is the whirlwind that shatters the forest trees, beats down the corn and devastates the fields where nettles will afterward flourish.

War is not a reviving blood-letting, but an exhausting hemorrhage, which blanches the life-producing organs and prepares germs. War scatters the seeds of disease, sorrow, hate and death, all of which cause the deterioration of the race.